



General Assembly

February Session, 2006

Raised Bill No. 267

LCO No. 1669

01669_____CE_

Referred to Committee on Commerce

Introduced by:
(CE)

AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) (a) Any of the following
2 entities may, either individually or in conjunction with one or more
3 other such entities, establish a regional economic development district
4 for the purposes of sections 1 to 5, inclusive, and 7 and 8 of this act and
5 section 16a-27 of the 2006 supplement to the general statutes, as
6 amended by this act: (1) A regional economic development
7 commission formed under section 7-137 of the general statutes, (2)
8 another regional economic development commission or corporation
9 formed under any other provision of the general statutes or any special
10 act, (3) a regional planning agency organized under the provisions of
11 chapter 127 of the general statutes, (4) a regional council of
12 governments organized under sections 4-124i to 4-124p, inclusive, of
13 the general statutes, or (5) a regional council of elected officials
14 organized under the provisions of chapter 50 of the general statutes for
15 planning and implementation of regional economic development. The
16 entity or entities establishing a regional economic development district
17 shall provide for a board of directors of the district.

18 (b) The boundaries of such districts shall, to the extent practicable,
19 be contiguous with boundaries of the planning regions defined by the
20 Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management pursuant to section
21 16a-4a of the general statutes. Each district shall contain at least one
22 area that meets one or more of the criteria of low per capita income,
23 high unemployment or unemployment or economic adjustment
24 problems set forth in 42 USC 3161 and regulations adopted pursuant to
25 Chapter 38 of Title 42 of the United States Code.

26 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) (a) The board of directors of a
27 regional economic development district shall prepare and approve a
28 comprehensive economic development strategy for the district to
29 address identified economic development problems in a manner that
30 promotes economic development and opportunity, fosters effective
31 transportation access, improves workforce development, enhances and
32 protects the environment and balances resources through sound
33 management of development. A comprehensive economic
34 development strategy shall contain:

35 (1) An analysis of economic and community development problems
36 and opportunities, including incorporation of any relevant material or
37 suggestions from other government-sponsored or supported plans;

38 (2) Background and history of the economic development situation
39 in the district, with a discussion of the economy, geography,
40 population, labor force, resources and the environment;

41 (3) A discussion of community participation in the planning efforts
42 for the strategy;

43 (4) The goals and objectives for (A) taking advantage of the
44 opportunities in the district, and (B) solving the economic
45 development problems of the district;

46 (5) A plan of action, including suggested projects to implement the
47 goals and objectives set forth in subdivision (4) of this subsection; and

48 (6) Performance measures that will be used to evaluate whether and
49 to what extent such goals and objectives have been met.

50 (b) Upon approving the comprehensive economic development
51 strategy for a district, the board of directors of the district shall submit
52 the strategy to the regional council of governments, regional councils
53 of elected officials and regional planning agencies serving any portion
54 of the geographical area of such district, provided such regional
55 council of elected officials or regional planning agencies are not part of
56 the regional economic development district pursuant to section 1 of
57 this act. Not later than forty-five days after receiving the strategy, said
58 councils or agencies shall review the strategy and notify said board of
59 directors of either their approval of the strategy or recommendations
60 for modifying the strategy for consistency with the regional plan of
61 development required under section 8-35a of the 2006 supplement to
62 the general statutes. If said councils and agencies do not notify the
63 board within said forty-five days, the strategy shall be deemed to have
64 been approved. If said councils and agencies recommend
65 modifications, the board shall modify the strategy in accordance with
66 such recommendations and resubmit the strategy for review in the
67 same manner as for the original submission of the strategy.

68 (c) After approval of the comprehensive economic development
69 strategy under subsection (b) of this section, the board of directors of
70 the district shall submit the strategy to the Commissioner of Economic
71 and Community Development. The commissioner shall review the
72 strategy and, not later than forty-five days after receiving the strategy,
73 shall notify said board of directors of either the commissioner's
74 approval of the strategy or recommendations for modifying the
75 strategy for consistency with title 32 of the general statutes, Chapter 38
76 of Title 42 of the United States Code and regulations adopted pursuant
77 to said Chapter 38 and with the state-wide comprehensive economic
78 development strategy required under section 5 of this act. If the
79 commissioner does not notify the board within said forty-five days, the
80 strategy shall be deemed to have been approved. If said commissioner

81 recommends modifications, the board shall modify the strategy in
82 accordance with such recommendations and resubmit the strategy for
83 review in the same manner as for the original submission of the
84 strategy.

85 (d) The board of directors of a regional economic development
86 district shall update a comprehensive economic development strategy
87 at least once every five years. The board shall submit each updated
88 strategy for review and approval in accordance with the same
89 procedure as for a new strategy under subsections (b) and (c) of this
90 section.

91 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) (a) Upon approval by the
92 Commissioner of Economic and Community Development of a
93 comprehensive economic development strategy for a regional
94 economic development district, the board of directors of said district
95 shall submit the strategy to the United States Secretary of Commerce
96 for approval pursuant to Chapter 38 of Title 42 of the United States
97 Code and regulations adopted pursuant to said Chapter 38, unless
98 such comprehensive economic development strategy was submitted to
99 and approved by said secretary before the effective date of this section.

100 (b) The board of directors of a regional economic development
101 district that submits a comprehensive economic development strategy
102 to the United States Secretary of Commerce or has previously
103 submitted and received the approval of said secretary of such a
104 strategy shall apply to said secretary for federal designation of the
105 economic development district pursuant to Chapter 38 of Title 42 of
106 the United States Code and regulations adopted pursuant to said
107 Chapter 38. Approval by the Commissioner of Economic and
108 Community Development of the comprehensive economic
109 development strategy under section 2 of this act shall be deemed to
110 meet the requirements of said Chapter 38 and regulations with regard
111 to gubernatorial approval of the economic development district
112 application.

113 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) Not later than March 1, 2007, the
114 Commissioner of Economic and Community Development shall
115 prepare a state-wide comprehensive economic development strategy.
116 Such state strategy shall (1) on a state-wide basis, address the issues
117 and include the content required for a regional comprehensive
118 economic development strategy required under subsection (a) of
119 section 2 of this act, and (2) coordinate state-wide and regional
120 economic development planning and policies.

121 Sec. 5. Section 16a-27 of the 2006 supplement to the general statutes
122 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
123 *1, 2006*):

124 (a) The secretary, after consultation with all appropriate state,
125 regional and local agencies and other appropriate persons, shall prior
126 to March 1, 2009, complete a revision of the existing plan and enlarge it
127 to include, but not be limited to, policies relating to transportation,
128 energy and air. Any revision made after May 15, 1991, shall identify
129 the major transportation proposals, including proposals for mass
130 transit, contained in the master transportation plan prepared pursuant
131 to section 13b-15. Any revision made after July 1, 1995, shall take into
132 consideration the conservation and development of greenways that
133 have been designated by municipalities and shall recommend that
134 state agencies coordinate their efforts to support the development of a
135 state-wide greenways system. The Commissioner of Environmental
136 Protection shall identify state-owned land for inclusion in the plan as
137 potential components of a state greenways system.

138 (b) Any revision made after August 20, 2003, shall take into account
139 (1) economic and community development needs and patterns of
140 commerce, and (2) linkages of affordable housing objectives and land
141 use objectives with transportation systems.

142 (c) Any revision made after March 1, 2006, shall (1) take into
143 consideration risks associated with natural hazards, including, but not
144 limited to, flooding, high winds and wildfires; (2) identify the potential

145 impacts of natural hazards on infrastructure and property; [and] (3)
 146 make recommendations for the siting of future infrastructure and
 147 property development to minimize the use of areas prone to natural
 148 hazards, including, but not limited to, flooding, high winds and
 149 wildfires; and (4) include the state-wide comprehensive economic
 150 development strategy prepared by the Commissioner of Economic and
 151 Community Development under section 4 of this act.

152 (d) Any revision after July 1, 2005, shall describe the progress
 153 towards achievement of the goals and objectives established in the
 154 previously adopted state plan of conservation and development and
 155 shall identify (1) areas where it is prudent and feasible (A) to have
 156 compact, transit accessible, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use
 157 development patterns and land reuse, and (B) to promote such
 158 development patterns and land reuse, (2) priority funding areas
 159 designated under section 16a-35c, and (3) corridor management areas
 160 on either side of a limited access highway or a rail line. In designating
 161 corridor management areas, the secretary shall make
 162 recommendations that (A) promote land use and transportation
 163 options to reduce the growth of traffic congestion; (B) connect
 164 infrastructure and other development decisions; (C) promote
 165 development that minimizes the cost of new infrastructure facilities
 166 and maximizes the use of existing infrastructure facilities; and (D)
 167 increase intermunicipal and regional cooperation.

168 (e) Thereafter on or before March first in each revision year the
 169 secretary shall complete a revision of the plan of conservation and
 170 development.

171 Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) Regional planning agencies
 172 shall include the comprehensive economic development strategies
 173 prepared under section 2 of this act in regional plans of development
 174 required under section 8-35a of the 2006 supplement to the general
 175 statutes.

176 Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) The Commissioner of Economic

177 and Community Development may, within available appropriations,
178 make grants of not more than fifty thousand dollars, annually, to
179 regional economic development districts to develop, amend and
180 implement comprehensive economic development strategies under
181 section 2 of this act.

182 Sec. 8. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) Projects identified in
183 comprehensive economic development strategies approved by the
184 Commissioner of Economic and Community Development and the
185 United States Secretary of Commerce under section 3 of this act shall
186 be eligible projects for funding with bond funds available to the
187 Commissioner of Economic and Community Development.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	16a-27
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	New section
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	New section
Sec. 8	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To promote regional economic development in the state by dividing the state into five regional economic development districts, providing for comprehensive economic development strategies for such districts and coordinating state and regional economic development planning. This will make the state eligible for additional funding from the federal Economic Development Administration.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]